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## **CITY OF RALEIGH ARTS COMMISSION ANNOUNCES 2010 BLOCK ART GALLERY EXHIBITION SERIES**

Embarking in its 26th year, the Miriam Preston Block Art Gallery managed by the City of Raleigh Arts Commission is presenting its 2010 exhibition series "Exhibiting Dichotomies."

Featured exhibitions include "dual/focus," Feb. 4 to March 22; "home/journeys," April 8 to May 24; "earth/sky," June 3 to July 26; "over/under," Aug. 5 to Sept. 20; "rew/ffwd" (rewind/fast forward), Sept. 30 to Nov. 22; and the National Arts Program, Dec. 2 to Jan. 17, 2011. All of the exhibits will be displayed in the Block Art Gallery on the first and second floors of the Avery C. Upchurch Government Complex, 222 W. Hargett St. A reception will be held the first Thursday of each exhibit's opening month.

Launching this year's program is "dual/focus," curated by Rachel Berry and Sarah Powers. "Dual/focus" explores the roots of printmaking and photography in both technology and fine art. Artists featured will be Jason Arthurs, Gabriella Corter, Mary Shannon Johnstone, Judy Jones, Mary Kay Kennedy, Julie Niskanen, Alison Overton, Kristianne Ripple, and Susan Soper. The second-floor cases will showcase digital fiber art by Tricia McKellar.

Following "dual/focus" is "home/journeys," which looks at how familiar landscapes are altered by light, shape, and sound through the paintings of Kathy Brancato and Kenneth Eugene Peters. The cases will display Mikel Robinson's mixed media work, centering on ideas of home and landscapes.

In the next exhibition, "earth/sky," Gene Furr and Anna Podris come together to examine the natural world, but with two disparate methods. Mr. Furr utilizes the

realistic eye of the camera lens to capture moments, like those of an egret returning to her nest, while Ms. Podris focuses on the intuitive vistas of the mind to create fantastical depictions of the natural world and its inhabitants. Handmade wooden vessels by Bill Wallace will be featured in the second floor cases.

Eduardo Lapetina and Kristan Five Skinner build up and dig down into multi-layered tonal surfaces in their textural paintings featured in the “over/under” exhibition. While Mr. Lapetina looks inward for inspiration, Ms. Skinner examines the external world, often by surveying the patterns created in vast aerial views of the Earth. The cases will feature pottery by Maureen McGregor.

“Rew/ffwd” (rewind/fast forward) will highlight the mixed media works of Georges Le Chevallier, the prints of Brian Gonzales, and the stencils of Garrett Scales. Their work reflects on American culture and its fascination with the glitz of celebrity and hi-tech media amidst the routine of everyday life. A display created by textile and apparel technology and management students at North Carolina State University will be showcased in the gallery’s cases.

Jean McLaughlin, executive director of the Penland School of Crafts and a former exhibiting artist in the Block Art Gallery, highlights the importance of the gallery in her essay, “Twenty-Five Years of Engaging the Public.”

“How many people came to pay a bill, meet with a public official, or attend a City Council meeting and found themselves surrounded by visual ideas that made them laugh, challenged their point of view, calmed them, or opened up their minds to questions sparked by an artist’s skill or attention to the world we share?” Ms. McLaughlin said.

For 26 years, the Miriam Preston Block Art Gallery has served as a pivotal exhibition space in the City of Raleigh, connecting local artists to community through ongoing exhibitions and public outreach. The gallery was dedicated in 2006 to honor Miriam Preston Block, a former Raleigh City Council member and community leader.

Established in 1977 as the official advisory body and advocate for the arts to the Raleigh City Council, the City of Raleigh Arts Commission holds the distinction of being the first municipal arts commission created in North Carolina. Serving as the leading force to champion the arts with Raleigh citizens and their representatives, the Arts Commission’s myriad activities foster, support, and promote the arts in the Capital City.

The Block Art Gallery is open Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 5:15 p.m., except on holidays. For more information, contact the Raleigh Arts Commission office at 996-3610 or email Hannah Costner, gallery coordinator, at [hannah.costner@ci.raleigh.nc.us](mailto:hannah.costner@ci.raleigh.nc.us).

**{NOTE TO MEDIA:** Attached is the oil painting “House with Red Curtains” by Kenneth Eugene Peters, whose work will be on display in the “home/journeys” exhibition.}

